



Hickenlooper's Plan for Gun Violence Prevention

A Record of Accomplishment in a Purple State

After the tragic mass shooting at the Aurora movie theater, Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper signed into law landmark reforms on gun safety that required background checks for private and online gun sales and that banned high-capacity magazines. Colorado is the first purple state to enact such meaningful gun safety legislation.

In April 2013, President Obama said, "I think that Colorado has shown that practical progress is possible thanks to the leadership of Governor Hickenlooper and some of the state legislators who are here today...I want to thank Governor Hickenlooper for his outstanding leadership."

During his re-election campaign in 2014, a challenging year for Democrats, Governor Hickenlooper faced strong criticism from Republicans and gun rights advocates. Throughout the campaign, Governor Hickenlooper reaffirmed his support for gun safety legislation and said he would sign the limit on high-capacity magazines again.

After the Parkland shooting in February 2018, Governor Hickenlooper called for additional gun safety laws, including a ban on "bump stocks" and a "red flag" bill that would be proposed during the 2018 Colorado legislative session. During national television interviews, he urged the nation to use the Colorado model in taking on the NRA in enacting common sense proposals such as universal background checks.

The number of deaths per year from firearms in our nation has surged to 39,773, the highest figure in the 50 years that this data has been collected.¹ Governor Hickenlooper recognizes that gun violence in our nation is a public health epidemic that requires an urgent and comprehensive set of national strategies. As President, he would institute the following policies.

Education and Safety

National standard for gun licensing

In this country, before you can drive a car, you have to get a license and demonstrate you can responsibly drive a vehicle. Governor Hickenlooper would create that same rite of passage for gun ownership, with two primary elements:

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/18/us/gun-deaths.html>



First, gun owners will obtain a national gun license based on eligibility requirements including a background check. This license would be renewed online every five years. Gun owners will have a three-year grace period to meeting the licensing requirements.

Second, for the next generation of gun owners, gun owners turning 21 after the Hickenlooper plan is passed, would need to undergo gun safety and storage training as part of the licensing requirement. Most hunters go through hunter safety classes to obtain a hunting license, so it reasons we should expand this practice across guns that are even more potentially dangerous than a hunting rifle.

Opposing concealed carry reciprocity

For the last two years, Republicans in Congress and the National Rifle Association have pushed concealed carry reciprocity. This legislation would essentially invalidate local gun safety regulations across the country by requiring states and municipalities to recognize concealed carry permits from other states regardless of the requirements it took to get those out-of-state permits. Authorities in major cities with robust gun safety laws would be forced to accept much-less stringent concealed carry permits from very different places. Standards to receive concealed carry permits in Alabama are very different than those in Chicago, but under concealed carry reciprocity, they would be treated the same.

As Governor of Colorado, Hickenlooper effectively opposed concealed carry reciprocity legislation. That's why as President, Hickenlooper will oppose and veto concealed carry reciprocity legislation.

Fund local community-based programs to break the cycle of gun violence in urban areas

Gun violence is devastating to all of our communities, though gun violence is disproportionately high in dense, underserved urban areas, particularly within impoverished communities of color.² Hickenlooper knows the only way to address this violence is through a holistic approach: effective gun laws to deal with the flood of guns are part of the solution but we also need to invest in economic development and proven, local community-based strategies and services to reduce the epidemic of gun violence in our communities.

These programs will hire individuals from the local communities to participate in Group Violence Intervention, Hospital-based Violence Intervention and other holistic programs that have been proven to work.

² <https://lawcenter.giffords.org/gun-laws/policy-areas/other-laws-policies/intervention-strategies/>



Local community advocates will provide services that benefit at-risk individuals such as Hickenlooper's apprenticeship program, mobility assistance, preventive and post-traumatic mental health treatment, and housing support. A person whose basic needs are being met is far less likely to engage in violent behavior.³

Replicate the Massachusetts safe storage law

Currently, only Massachusetts has a law requiring that firearms are stored in a locked location. With today's technology, gun safes are faster to open and easier to access than ever. It's time for the federal government to require that guns are stored behind a lock. This will prevent children from accessing guns, reduce suicides, and keep our communities safer.

Using Data to Stop Mass Shootings

Leverage technology to strengthen threat assessments

Law enforcement lacks the capacity to do the deep research of every planned, thwarted or executed school attack. This is where public-private partnerships can step in to assist with predictive analytics. In Denver, for example, a remarkable student Shreya Nallapatti was motivated to act after the Parkland shooting. Nallapatti brought together a team of young technologists to analyze historic gun violence to help understand the factors that can be predictive of a mass shooting.⁴

In Cincinnati, a research team at the Children's Hospital Medical Center is using predictive data analysis to assist therapists and counselors in assessing students' risk for school violence. In the pilot study of 103 students in 74 schools, the machine learning algorithm was highly accurate in assessing school violence risk.⁵

During his terms as Mayor and Governor, Hickenlooper set a national model for initiating public-private partnerships to solve big problems and drive innovation.⁶ President Hickenlooper would build on that legacy at the federal level including in the technology sector.

Fund CDC research on gun violence.

³ <https://lawcenter.giffords.org/gun-laws/policy-areas/other-laws-policies/intervention-strategies/>

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<https://www.forbes.com/sites/geekgirlrising/2018/05/03/how-this-teen-is-using-artificial-intelligence-to-stop-gun-violence/#5cf06d873526>

⁵ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11126-018-9581-8>

⁶ <https://www.bizjournals.com/denver/news/2018/01/10/on-eve-of-final-state-address-hickenlooper.html>



For two decades, Congress has prevented the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), from adequately researching the impact of gun violence and how to prevent gun violence. Congress also hindered research with the Tiahrt Amendment in 2003, which limits ATF's authority to release gun trace data. Of all the leading causes of death in our country, gun violence receives by far the least amount of research funding.⁷

Hickenlooper will immediately move to fund the CDC's research into gun violence prevention and will direct that the CDC's findings be used in conjunction with solutions to reduce gun violence.

Keeping Firearms in the Right Hands

National universal background checks

We need a national system of universal background checks to address the state-by-state patchwork and loopholes. An overwhelming majority of Americans support requiring a background check for all gun sales. Currently, one in five gun purchases are not subject to a background check because of existing loopholes. The nonpartisan Rand Corporation estimates universal background checks could prevent 1,100 homicides a year. As President, Governor Hickenlooper will close this loophole and expand the waiting period to 10 days to eliminate the "Charleston Loophole."

Raising the age to purchase a firearm to 21

Too many young people have access to guns. By raising the minimum age to purchase a gun to 21, we will reduce intentional, accidental and suicidal gun violence. Florida recently raised the minimum age to 21 (in legislation signed by a Republican governor) and it is time we had a standard, nationwide age restriction on gun purchases.

Stopping gun trafficking

Governor Hickenlooper knows law enforcement needs the necessary tools to go after our most dangerous gun criminals – criminals who traffic crime guns with little fear of prosecution. Instead of a common-sense federal gun trafficking law, prosecutors are forced to rely on a patchwork of inconsistent and ineffective state laws. This dangerous omission must be immediately addressed. Just like the RICO Act significantly and permanently weakened the Mafia, we need federal legislation to stop our most dangerous criminals from trafficking guns and endangering our communities.

Each year, there are roughly 450,000 instances in which a criminal uses a firearm in a violent crime (i.e., rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple

⁷ <https://www.businessinsider.com/gun-control-in-america-how-many-dollars-the-us-spends-on-gun-violence-research-2018-3>



assault). When law enforcement is able to trace the guns used in these crimes, they have found that in 9 out of 10 cases, the person who originally bought the gun is different from the person who used it. And a third of these guns came from out of state.

Hickenlooper strongly supports a federal gun trafficking law to stem the flow of crime guns to our most dangerous criminals. Combined with universal background checks, this new gun trafficking law will make our communities safer by getting guns out of the hands of bad actors who are destroying our neighborhoods.

We need to make gun trafficking a federal crime and we can make our communities safer by punishing criminals who sell or transfer guns they know or should reasonably know have been illegally obtained. We also must amend the federal Criminal Code to allow for conspiracy charges against offenders who continue to move guns across state lines to be sold to criminals.

Folding the ATF into the FBI

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) is one of the federal government's oldest bureaus. Over time its mission has included oversight of alcohol, tobacco, arms, and explosives, with primary focus on firearms enforcement. Yet, the ATF has never developed a clear mission or foothold among federal law enforcement agencies.

While ATF agents are productive and dedicated, their agency has been hobbled by bureaucratic and political obstacles;⁸ it has suffered from inadequate oversight and fragmentation from other federal law enforcement agencies. Congress, heavily influenced by the N.R.A., has further compromised the agency by preventing its director from being confirmed and imposing limitations that prevent the agency from implementing the simplest of measures to track the ownership of firearms.⁹ It struggles to perform basic duties, including inspections of firearms dealers and the tracking of gun-related crimes.

Nine out of ten guns used in crimes come from only 5% of gun dealers. While the ATF is aware of who these gun dealers are, it has responded with alarming leniency and allowed many of the worst offenders to keep their licenses.¹⁰

Extraordinary cooperation is required to tackle the multi-jurisdictional and complex epidemic of gun crime, with more than 300 million guns in private hands in the U.S. It's time that the ATF and its mission, agents, and staff, are transferred into the FBI, the law

⁸ <http://www.allgov.com/departments/departments-of-justice/bureau-of-alcohol-tobacco-firearms-and-explosives-atf?agencyid=7192>

⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/22/us/politics/trump-atf-nra.html>

¹⁰ <https://brady-static.s3.amazonaws.com/globals/BradyPolicyApproach.pdf>



enforcement agency whose mission is “to uphold and enforce the criminal laws of the United States.”¹¹ This move would give agents stability, prevent agencies from competing over the same cases, and finally put firearms crimes in the same standing as other offenses.

Grants to encourage states to implement extreme risk protection orders

Colorado and fourteen other states have Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) laws on the books. These laws let families and law enforcement temporarily remove an individual’s access to firearms in order to prevent future acts of violence. This type of state-level legislation needs to be incentivized. We also need to make sure individuals under ERPOs cannot pass background checks to obtain firearms. As President, Hickenlooper will create a grant program to help states give local law enforcement the resources they need to implement extreme risk protection orders.

ERPO laws aren’t just a way to stop mass shootings. Studies have shown that they are an effective tool at reducing suicides. ERPO laws give loved ones a civil option to intervene on warning signs and prevent tragedies from occurring. It’s time the federal government helps put them in place across the country.

Eliminating Weapons of War

National magazine limits

Governor Hickenlooper passed magazine limits in Colorado and he supports magazine limits nationwide; 155% more people are shot in incidents where assault weapons or high-capacity magazines are used.¹²

Magazine limits save lives during mass shootings and responsible hunters and gun owners agree that high-capacity magazines serve little purpose other than turning firearms into weapons of war.

Codifying the ban on bump stocks

After the tragic Las Vegas shooting in 2017, the DOJ reinterpreted a long-standing rule to effectively ban bump stocks. These and other similar accessories essentially turn legal firearms into automatic weapons. It’s time for Congress to affirm that interpretation and codify it into law. We must act to permanently ban these lethal accessories.

Banning the sale of silencers

¹¹<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/guns-crime/reports/2015/05/19/111386/the-bureau-and-the-bureau/>

¹² <https://www.bradynited.org/key-statistics>



Silencers suppress the noise from gunfire and cover the muzzle flash. They make it more difficult for potential witnesses and law enforcement to locate gunfire. Currently, silencers must be registered with the ATF, but eight states and the District of Columbia have banned them despite the federal registry. The federal should ban silencers because they enable criminals, make the jobs of law enforcement harder, and do not serve the overall public good.

Bringing back the assault weapons ban

Assault weapons are responsible for one out of five police deaths.¹³ Mass shootings involving assault weapons or high-capacity magazines lead to an average of 155% more injuries.¹⁴ Assault weapons were used in many of our nation's most deadly mass shootings including those at the Las Vegas Harvest Music Festival, Sandy Hook Elementary School, and the Aurora Theater. It's time for Congress to enact a meaningful and effective assault weapons ban that builds on the previous legislation that expired in 2004. If the original ban had not been allowed to lapse, fewer assault weapons would be on the streets, mass shootings would be less devastating, and our law enforcement would be safer.

As President, Hickenlooper would support and sign into law the [Assault Weapons Ban of 2019](#) (S.66), introduced by Senators Feinstein, Murphy and Blumenthal that thoughtfully addresses many of the ways the gun industry found to evade the prior law while also providing exemptions for 2,200 guns for hunting, household defense or recreational purposes.

Outlaw the manufacture of ghost guns and 3-D printed guns

3D printing has opened the door for new dangerous firearms. Printable guns are untraceable and often made with so little metal that even metal detectors fail to notice them. Meanwhile, other firearms are easily assembled from kits that can be ordered online. These guns also provide a convenient way for criminals to get around the background check system or to produce illegal firearms. These printed firearms also make it difficult for law enforcement because traditionally they can track where a firearm was produced and first sold based on the gun's serial number. It's time the federal government bans the creation of these firearms and works harder to prevent the proliferation of the plans to print them.

Keeping Our Schools Safe

Prevent gun violence in our schools.

¹³ <https://www.bradyunited.org/key-statistics>

¹⁴ <https://www.bradyunited.org/key-statistics>



We need a comprehensive effort to strengthen prevention in the epidemic of school shootings. This is a recurring tragedy that has taken too many lives of our young people and traumatized millions more. We applaud the bravery of our students and educators and first-responders, but we need to do more to keep them safe. Governor Hickenlooper supports actions to:

Expand access to mental health services in our schools and communities

Fewer than one out of six children (16%) receive any mental health services. Untreated or poorly managed childhood mental health disorders have significant consequences not only for the child and family but also for a range of systems, including health care, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems and public education. While people living with mental illness are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators, any comprehensive strategy to prevent gun violence must include mental health supports.

The expansion of Medicaid has increased the funding available to Medicaid managed care programs and community health centers to broaden and better integrate behavioral health services.

President Trump has proposed deep, devastating cuts in Medicaid funding, the single largest funder of mental health services in the country. President Hickenlooper would lead in the opposite direction, recognizing the critical importance of all sources of federal funding for mental health services including federal matches of state Medicaid and CHIP spending and Mental Health Block Grants that support community mental health services to fully fund and support quality, innovation and universal access to mental health services.

Additionally, President Hickenlooper would seek to leverage and direct Medicaid funds toward preventive behavioral health integration in pediatric primary care and school-based health centers. President Hickenlooper would overhaul payments for children's health care so that quality and outcomes are rewarded—rather than the quantity of care delivered—which would have a positive impact on children's health.

Establish threat assessment teams nationwide

Launch a “national program to train and support school- and community-based threat assessment teams that include mental health and law enforcement partners. Threat assessment programs should include practical channels of communication for persons to report potential threats as well as interventions to resolve conflicts and assist troubled individuals.”¹⁵

Bring Colorado's Successful “Safe 2 Tell” Program to Every School

¹⁵ <https://curry.virginia.edu/prevent-gun-violence>



The Safe 2 Tell program in Colorado is an anonymous way for students, parents, teachers and community members to report safety concerns. It is similar to the federal Crime Stoppers program, but school and youth focused. The program has an anonymous phone line, app, and website that allow people to report their concerns whenever and however they think is best. The program has been wildly successful in Colorado leading to thousands of reports. Each year concerns about suicides, bullying, substance abuse, planned attacks, domestic abuse, child abuse, and many more are reported. The program is centered around informing youth that this is a safe way for them to report concerns without fear of punishment. As President, John Hickenlooper will work with states to create a national Safe 2 Tell program so that we can prevent tragedies everywhere.

Long term support for survivors and first responders

While federal funding is currently provided to support survivors and victims' families in the immediate aftermath of a mass shooting, the terrible recent losses make clear those resources need to be available long-term. We need to provide trauma-informed care and ongoing support for victims based on a clinical assessment of need.

Liability for Manufacturers and Dealers

Repeal the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA)

In 2005, Congress shielded gun manufacturers from liability. This protection allows gun manufacturers to ignore basic preventive measures to avoid gun traffickers, disincentives them to correct and recall defective and potentially products, and to avoid risky distributors and dealers. The PLCAA needs to be repealed to put gun manufacturers in the same category as every other business. No private enterprise should be immune from liability.